



news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Easy steps to greater energy efficiency

Do you want to save money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy, a “typical American family” spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money, however, is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several relatively easy ways to save energy without a substantial commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home. And, you won't have to hire a specialist or call in a favor from someone who is handy with tools to help you.

Where to start

According to *Money Magazine*, “improving the envelope” of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind vibrations can loosen up even a

Caulking around windows and doors can help mitigate energy loss even in a tight home.



Programmable thermostats can reduce your energy use by not running your HVAC system when you are away or sleeping.

tight home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not close tightly, and duct work can spring leaks, wasting cooled and heated air. By placing weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors, you can keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and creates greater efficiency. Apply weather stripping around overlooked spaces such as your attic hatch or pull-down stairs.

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LED bulbs have an estimated operational life span of typically 10,000 to 20,000 hours compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent. According to the Department of Energy, by replacing your home's five

most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with models that have earned the ENERGY STAR rating, you can save \$75 each year.

Wrapping up savings

Installing a blanket around your water heater could reduce standby heat losses by 25 to 45 percent, and save you about 7 to 16 percent in water heating costs, according to the Department of Energy. For a small investment of about \$30, you can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets and install them in about one hour. On a safety note, the Department of Energy recommends that you not set the thermostat above 130 degrees Fahrenheit on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket; a higher temperature setting could cause the wiring to overheat.

Given that a large portion of your

See EFFICIENCY, page 7



**Manager's Notes
by Telly Stanger**

Generator safety

OUR main goal at Lincoln Electric Cooperative (LEC) is to provide safe, reliable electricity to our members and, despite some the challenges we face with weather and trees, I believe we do a great job of this. I understand the challenges of being without electricity for prolonged periods of time. Many LEC members have installed backup generators at their homes in the past, and many more have recently made this deci-

sion. Installing a backup generator is a serious and potentially dangerous undertaking. LEC recommends generator installation be done by a qualified, licensed professional to help ensure the work is done correctly and safely. There are many highly capable local contractors who perform quality work. If you would like more information on local installers, please contact the LEC office.

Generators connect to homes and appli-

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	YEAR TO DATE 06/30/2021	YEAR TO DATE 06/30/2020
kWh SALES	62,953,419	59,542,830
REVENUE	\$6,231,290	\$5,983,362
COST OF POWER	\$2,844,450	\$2,756,097
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$1,945,525	\$1,958,749
MARGINS	\$732,562	\$510,526
NUMBER OF MEMBERS	4,858	4,737
NUMBER OF METERS	6,244	6,116
MILES OF LINE	981	974
TOTAL UTILITY PLANT	\$35,367,875	\$33,840,544
MEMBER EQUITY	\$11,288,002	\$9,8132,282
JUNE AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL USE (KWH)	818	749
JUNE AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL BILLING	\$111.46	\$101.95

BUSINESS AND BOARDROOM BRIEFS

The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on July 19, 2021. A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:

- Appointed trustees to the MECA Summer Board Meeting 2022 planning committee.
- Accepted a bid for the LEC financial audit for the next three years from DeCoria, Blair, & Teague, PS.
- Approved a donation of \$1,000 to the Tobacco Valley Animal Shelter.
- Approved a donation of \$500 to the Rocky Peterson Memorial Fund.
- Authorized changing the time for August 16th's regular board meeting to 3:00 pm.
- Authorized changing October's regular board meeting from October 18th to October 25th.
- Accepted the resignation of Troy Truman from the LEC and RPS Board of Trustees.
- Accepted Craig Eaton as the RPC Community-At-Large Board member.
- Appointed Becky Evins as a RPS Board member representing LEC.
- Appointed Mike Garner to the Revolving Loan Fund committee.
- Authorized various trustees to attend trainings, conferences, and meetings.

LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

CONTACT

1-406-889-3301
 info@lincolnelectric.coop
 www.lincolnelectric.coop
 Secure Payments: 1-833-890-6258

ALWAYS REPORT OUTAGES TO:

1-406-889-3301

OFFICE

312 Osloski Road
 PO BOX 628
 Eureka, Montana 59917

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Tina Taurman
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 Marianne Roose
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 Becky Evins
 Michael Garner
 Joel Graves
 Sandi Mason
 Rick Peterson
 Troy Truman
 Ethel White
 Telly Stanger
 General Manager

Lincoln Electric's Board of Trustees hold regular monthly meetings at the boardroom in the cooperative office. These are typically scheduled on the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend. If you have any items of interest, please contact the general manager prior to the meeting.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:
 MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021**



**Lincoln Electric
 Cooperative, Inc.**

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

SEND YOUR IDEAS TO:
 memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop

Continued from previous page

ances in different ways.

Portable Generators

Portable generators are designed for powering specific devices by utilizing a heavy-duty extension cord. You start the generator, then plug the device(s) you want, such as a freezer, window air conditioner, or computer, into the generator.

Portable generators are usually not manufactured to connect directly into your home's wiring system.

To power your home circuit with a portable generator, you would need to purchase and install a transfer switch (see below).

Standby Generators

Standby generators are usually larger, more permanently installed units that can provide electricity directly into your home's electrical system. They may or may not come with an integrated transfer switch.

Standby generators should be sized to fulfill your specific needs. For example, some people may only want enough backup generation to power their heating/cooling system while others may desire for their entire home to be energized.

Transfer Switches

If you plan to connect any type of generator to your home's electrical system, you **MUST** have an approved and properly installed transfer switch. This switch isolates the electricity produced by the generator from LEC's grid to prevent dangerous backfeed that could be fatal to our employees.

Transfer switches can be automatic or manual. An automatic transfer switch will automatically instruct your generator to start and isolate from LEC's system when LEC power is out. These are the type typically used with standby generators. A manual transfer switch requires you to manually switch power supply to your generator and then start your generator when an outage

occurs. This type is commonly used with portable generators that are connected to your home's electric system.

Regardless of which type of switch you use, the most important thing is that the switch works correctly when the generator is running to isolate your generation from LEC's system. If backup power is feeding electricity on the LEC system during an outage, it could mean serious injury or death to anyone working on that line.

Some generators or transfer switches might require LEC personnel to manually adjust your service location to ensure everything is installed and operating correctly. Your electrician should be able to make the determination if LEC involvement is necessary.


For various reasons, LEC wants to know where backup generation is on its distribution system. As stated above, the main reason is safety. If there were ever an issue associated with a member's service, which has a backup generator, LEC would know it and communicate to outside personnel so they could be prepared.

A few simple reminders

Do your research – Determine what configuration is right for you. This includes how much you want to spend, what type of generator is best for you, and how large of a generator you want or need.

Use a professional – Do not try and cut corners when installing a generator. The ultimate safety of our members and our employees is important to LEC.

Communicate – Let LEC know you have a generator. It may require a visit from LEC, but LEC will note your account for our information.

For more information on generators and generator safety, please visit [esfi.org](#). If you have any questions concerning backup generators, please contact our office at 406-889-3301. 

Telly

EFFICIENCY


Continued from page 5

monthly energy bill goes toward heating and cooling your home, it makes sense to ensure your home's heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) system is performing at an optimal level. Checking, changing or cleaning your filter extends the life of your HVAC system and saves you money.

Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Otherwise, dust and dirt trapped in a system's air filter leads to several problems, including: reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs; lowered system efficiency; and costly duct cleaning or replacement. Many HVAC professionals recommend cleaning the system filters monthly. A simple task such as changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently, keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

Take control of your savings

Take a look at your programmable thermostat. When was the last time you checked to make sure it was programmed for the current season and family schedule? This is one of the best energy-saving tools at your fingertips. It enables you to fine-tune the temperature during particular hours of the day. Many models allow you to differentiate between weekday and weekend schedules, and Internet-connected thermostats can learn your schedule and make adjustments automatically. Most models come with an override option so you can make manual adjustments without losing overall programming. You can only achieve these efficiencies and savings if it is programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

Remember, there are easy steps you can take now to improve the energy efficiency of your home. To learn about additional ways to save, visit [energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver](#). 



Back to school

Transportation Safety

Whether children walk, ride their bicycle or take the bus to school, it is extremely important that they take proper safety precautions. Here are some tips to make sure your child safely travels to school:

Walking to school

Review your family's walking safety rules and practice walking to school with your child

- Walk on the sidewalk, if one is available; when on a street with no sidewalk, walk facing the traffic
- Before you cross the street, stop and look left, right and left again to see if cars are coming
- Make eye contact with drivers before crossing and always cross streets at crosswalks or intersections
- Stay alert and avoid distracted walking

Riding a bicycle to school

Teach your child the rules of the road and practice riding the bike route to school with your child

- Ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, and in single file
- Come to a complete stop before crossing the street; walk bikes across the street
- Stay alert and avoid distracted riding
- Make sure your child always wears a properly fitted helmet and bright clothing

Riding the bus to school

Teach your children school bus safety rules and practice with them

- Go to the bus stop with your child to teach them the proper way to get on and off the bus
- Teach your children to stand six feet (or 3 giant steps) away from the curb
- If your child must cross the street in front of the bus, teach him or her to walk on the side of the road until they are 10 feet ahead of the bus; your child and the bus driver should always be able to see each other



Driving your child to school

Stay alert and avoid distracted driving

- Obey school zone speed limits and follow your school's drop-off procedure
- Make eye contact with children who are crossing the street

School Safety

Many school-related injuries are completely preventable. Follow these steps to ensure your child's safety at school:

Preventing backpack-related injuries

Choose a backpack for your child carefully; it should have ergonomically designed features to enhance safety and comfort

- Ask your child to use both straps when wearing their backpack to evenly distribute the weight on their shoulders
- Don't overstuff a backpack; it should weigh no more than 5 to 10 percent of your child's body weight
- Rolling backpacks should be used cautiously since they can create a trip hazard in crowded school hallways

Preventing playground-related injuries

To reduce strangulation hazards on playgrounds, have your child leave necklaces and jackets with drawstrings at home